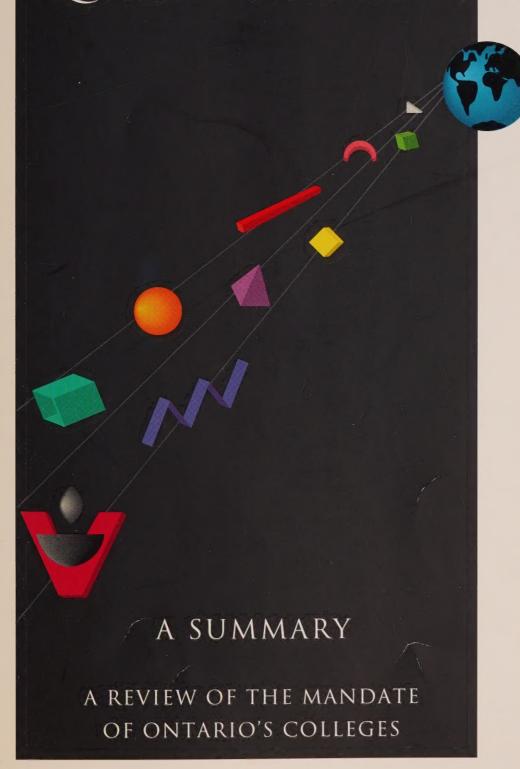
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VISION 2000: QUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY



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VISION 2000:

QUALITY AND OPPORTUNITY

A SUMMARY

THE FINAL REPORT OF VISION 2000
A REVIEW OF THE MANDATE

What should Ontario's college system look like in the year 2000 — and how do we get there from here?





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Table of Contents

Summary			1
1	Introduction		1
2	New Directions		2
3	Getting There From Here		2
4	Evolution of the System		3
5	New Realities		5
6	Challenge to Change		6
7	A Renewed Mandate		8
8	Assuring Quality		9
9	Enhancing Opportunity	1	1
10	Forging Links	1	5
11	Planning, Funding and Human Resources	1	8
12	Conclusion: Envisioning the Future	2	0
Appendix	A: Members of the Vision 2000 Steering Committee	2	5
Appendix	B: Members of Vision 2000 Study Teams	2	7
Appendix	C: Vision 2000 Co-ordinators	3.	3
Appendix	D: Vision 2000 Background Papers	3.	5
Appendix	E: Summary of Recommendations	3	8



Summary

1 Introduction

Vision 2000: Quality and Opportunity is about assuring the quality of career education provided by Ontario's college system and enhancing opportunities for students to participate. It is about how the colleges can help ensure that Ontario has the skilled and adaptable workforce necessary to prosper in the global economy, while contributing to the development of individuals as informed, productive and socially responsible citizens.

The report is written with a view to the year 2000 when a renewed and revitalized system of colleges of applied arts and technology will play a major role in meeting the growing demand for opportunities for career education.

It is written for the hundreds of thousands of students who attend college every year, as full or part-time learners, and for all those potential and future students who will be looking to the college system for an education that is relevant to the times and of consistently high quality.

Vision 2000's Final Report is the end product of an extensive process of research, consultation and debate across the province among those groups who have a stake in the college system: educators from colleges, schools and universities, students, employers, and representatives of labour and government. It was initiated in October, 1988 by the then Minister of Colleges and Universities, the Honourable Lyn McLeod, who asked the Council of Regents, a policy and planning agency which reports to the Minister, to develop "a vision of the college system in the year 2000."

A Vision 2000 Steering Committee, made up of 33 individuals representative of the stakeholders of the system, directed the collaborative process. (For a listing of Steering Committee members, see Appendix A.) Five study teams were established to handle the work of research and public consultation, with each group focussing on a different aspect of the college system and on different constituencies. In addition, a special "Sixth Table" brought together the Francophone representatives from the study teams, along with representatives from the Ministry of Colleges and Universities (MCU) and the Council of Franco-Ontarian Education. (For a listing of study team members, see Appendix B.)

The research and consultation process included surveys, focus groups, meetings and interviews, as well as commissioned research papers. The process elicited hundreds of submissions from interested groups and individuals. Each of the Study Teams and the Sixth Table produced its own report and recommendations.

2 New Directions

The collective search for a vision of the system for the next century is in itself a recognition that the colleges are at a crossroads, and that change is necessary to assist the system to meet the challenges of the future. Vision 2000 believes that the change that is needed is fundamental and far-reaching. Key directions for change in the report, aimed at assuring quality and enhancing opportunity, include:

- reorienting the curriculum of the colleges to include a greater emphasis on general education and generic skills¹ that will assist students in their individual development and enhance their long-term employability;
- establishing system-wide outcome standards and regular program review to confirm the value and consistency of programs leading to a college credential;
- improving accessibility and opportunities for success in college for a diverse range of learners, particularly those least well served in the past; and
- building better links among colleges, schools and universities to facilitate the movement of students between these institutions and to provide better access to more advanced training.

3 Getting There From Here

These directions, which are discussed in more detail later in this summary, will require:

- redesign of the curriculum of programs leading to a college credential, not only to increase the general education and generic skills content, but also to make delivery more relevant and flexible;
- creation of a standards and accreditation council, with broad representation, to guide the setting of system-wide standards and the monitoring of regular program review;
- a more pro-active approach to issues of educational equity, race relations, employment
 equity and community outreach activities by colleges;
- an ad hoc task force to advise the Minister on policy guidelines on fee-for-service training by colleges;
- establishment of a system to evaluate and give credit, on a consistent and equitable basis, for the prior learning and experience of those who have been away from the educational system for some time;

2

¹ General education is defined in the report as the study of subjects and issues, such as world events or the environment, which are central for life in our culture. Generic skills are defined as practical life skills essential to personal and career success, including language and communications skills, math skills, learning and thinking skills, interpersonal skills, and basic technology literacy.

- creation of a provincial body to promote co-ordination between the school system and the college system to ease students' transition from school to college;
- establishment of an institute "without walls" to provide opportunities for students wishing to pursue advanced training beyond a college diploma;
- attention to system-wide strategic planning so that colleges can operate more as a system, including the sharing of specialized resources;
- greater stability and co-ordination of government funding for the colleges; and
- renewed emphasis on developing the expertise of those who work in the college system, who will make necessary change happen in the classroom, the laboratory and the workplace.

The most important factor in realizing a new vision for the system, however, will be the degree of commitment to the renewal of the college system on the part of the Ontario government; the colleges themselves, including local boards of governors, college administrators, faculty and staff; and the other major stakeholders of the system. The collaboration which characterized the Vision 2000 process must continue.

It is Vision 2000's view that there is considerable support among stakeholders for the directions contained in the Final Report and confidence in the ability of the colleges to meet these challenges.

4 Evolution of the System

Ontario's system of colleges of applied arts and technology was created 25 years ago. In 1965, the then Education Minister William Davis inaugurated a new level and type of education in this province. These new colleges, he said, would serve those parts of the population whose needs were not being met by the existing system: secondary school graduates not destined for university, adults and out-of-school youth.

The colleges were created primarily to accommodate the "tidal waves" of baby boomers who would be graduating from high school in the years ahead. The new colleges would provide career or occupation-oriented education. They were to serve their local communities and co-operate closely with business and industry to ensure their programs kept up with the demands of new technology. There were also to be links between this new partner in the educational system and the school and university sectors.

The first colleges opened their doors in 1967. Today, the system has 22 colleges, offering programs on more than 100 campuses in over 60 cities and towns across the province. A 23rd institution, a French-language college named La Cité collégiale, located in the Ottawa area, is opening its doors to students in the fall of 1990.

In addition to about 95,000 post-secondary students attending college full-time, there are another 70,000 students enrolled in full-time, non-post-secondary training programs (apprenticeships and adult training programs of short duration). There are also an estimated 560,000 students, most of whom are adults over age 25, taking part-time, mainly career-oriented college studies.

In a given year, about one in 10 Ontarians aged 17 and older is taking a course at a college. As an illustration of the magnitude of more recent growth in the system, between 1978 and 1987 college enrolment in full-time, post-secondary programs increased by 48 per cent, and in part-time courses by 44 per cent.

In excess of 25,000 students now graduate annually from the colleges' one-, two-, and three-year programs. About 7,000 complete programs in the applied arts (e.g. early childhood education, broadcasting and fashion arts). Another 8,000 graduate in business-related fields, including business and office administration. The health sciences annually graduate about 5,000 students. And another 5,000 complete technology programs, such as aviation technology, computer science, biochemical technology and electromechanical technology.

In addition to post-secondary programs, the colleges also provide other types of programming: basic education, such as life skills and literacy, for adults; training in the trades, including apprentice-ships; and general interest and personal development courses. Over the years, the colleges have met demands for a variety of short-term training courses, purchased by the federal Canada Employment and Immigration Commission (CEIC), and the Ontario Ministry of Skills Development (MSD); these courses are often targeted to particular student groups. Much of the fee-for-service activity of the colleges, in addition to basic skills, is job-specific training; a small but growing proportion is directly sponsored by employers.

The colleges have much in common across the province, but they have also had the autonomy to develop their own character and areas of specialization, such as the Lindsay natural resources campus of Sir Sandford Fleming and the internationally-recognized animation program at Sheridan College in Oakville. Where colleges have seen opportunities to respond to changes in the marketplace, they have done so by developing programs, such as those in hospitality and tourism, to meet labour force needs in growth sectors in the economy.

The major funder for the colleges is the Ontario MCU, which provides approximately half of college operating revenues. The federal government, through CEIC, and the Ontario government, primarily through MSD and the Ministry of Education (MOE), are the source of almost 25 per cent of operating revenues; CEIC and MSD purchase training programs from the colleges directly or through intermediary bodies. MOE took over responsibility for basic skills training from MSD in April, 1990. Revenues from tuition fees (which represent about 10 per cent) and other income sources make up the balance of operating revenues.

The colleges provide a diverse array of programs and courses to an equally diverse range of students. The colleges have taken the breadth of their mandate to heart. Learners may go to college today to learn to read, to fly a helicopter, to dance, to operate heavy equipment or to program a robot.

5 New Realities

The colleges have played a valuable role in career education and training over the last 25 years in Ontario. They fill a unique niche in the educational system. Colleges are an alternative to university for students seeking education beyond secondary school. More than any other educational institution in the province, they serve the needs of adult learners, who have a variety of educational achievements and aspirations. Colleges are the public institution to whom employers and governments turn for the training of workers.

Creating a new level of education across the province virtually from the ground up has not been easy. Since their inception, the colleges have had to cope with tremendous growth and development; they have had to respond to changing demands for training; they have had to live with fluctuating sources and levels of funding.

Vision 2000 research and consultations have revealed that many aspects of the initial mission of the college system remain to be fulfilled. What is perhaps more significant for the future of the colleges is that the fundamental mandate on which the college system was founded — to provide career education for high school graduates, to provide training opportunities for adult workers, and to serve a diversity of communities — has become even more important for Ontario in the 1990s.

Current demographic and economic trends, such as an aging workforce, industrial restructuring, technological innovation and the changing skill content of many jobs, highlight the need for a dynamic college system which provides high-quality, relevant career education for a broad range of learners. For employers and employees alike, the ability to adapt quickly to new technology and other changes in the marketplace has become a major challenge.

Most of the workers in Ontario who will be required to learn new technologies and adapt to economic restructuring and increased global competition in the year 2000 are already in the labour market today. Many of them will need retraining to learn new skills — not once but several times over the course of their careers.

The Premier's Council on Technology, the Economic Council of Canada and other organizations and researchers have all pointed to the crucial role of education and training for the future. More opportunities are needed for advanced training to produce highly qualified workers, for basic skills training to raise the skill levels of underqualified workers and for adjustment training to assist those whose skills no longer match the demands of the marketplace.

6 Challenge to Change

Based on research and consultations, Vision 2000 perceives the major challenges facing the system to be the following:

Providing an education that is developmental in the sense that it provides a strong foundation for students to continue learning throughout their lives: There are concerns that there is insufficient emphasis on general education and generic skills in college post-secondary programs. Learning only narrow job-specific skills can lead to career dead-ending because the skills required in many occupations are changing rapidly. General education helps students understand and deal with their world. Generic skills, such as writing or interpersonal skills, help students adapt to changing circumstances in their work and personal lives.

Working as a system to assure program quality: There was an expectation in the original mandate that the colleges would operate as a province-wide system. However, there is widespread criticism that there are many similarly-titled post-secondary programs across the system which do not yield the same qualifications or skills for those who graduate. Significantly, the system has no means to either prove or disprove the perception that program variations indicate not only local adaptations, but differences in program quality. This is because there has been no system-wide program standards or regular, system-wide program review. In addition, there has not been any significant system-wide strategic planning.

Enhancing access with success: The growing diversity of communities, and particularly the multicultural face of Ontario, is placing increased demands on the colleges to improve accessibility for special communities. For some groups — such as those living in poverty, persons with physical disabilities, single parents, members of minority groups who speak neither English nor French, aboriginal peoples and those who are functionally illiterate — more active intervention is necessary to provide equitable access. Similar efforts are required for the colleges to play a full role in helping Ontario overcome the labour market inequality facing women and other groups.

If colleges are to enhance opportunities for the access and success of more students, the availability of preparatory, literacy, language and other such programs will have to be increased. It has been suggested that one of the major factors in the student attrition rate (an average of 40 per cent of college students in post-secondary programs drop out before graduation) is that students are underprepared for the academic challenge of a college program. Currently, there is also wide variation in the assessment and counselling services from college to college.

Providing for adult, part-time students: The primary orientation of college institutional structures and the provincial funding formula is toward the full-time, post-secondary student who usually has just graduated from high school. This bias makes it difficult for colleges to provide the flexible programs and access services needed by the growing numbers of adult learners, who are coming back to the educational system after some time in the workforce. Part-time students do not have the variety of course selection or range of support services that are routinely available to full-time students.

Furthermore, there is no accessible and equitable system of evaluating the prior learning and experience of entrants to college. This means that adult learners who have been away from the educational system for years or who have educational credentials from outside Ontario often have difficulty getting recognition for the knowledge and skills they have acquired prior to enrolling in a college program.

Addressing concerns from employers: Employers are saying that colleges can play a greater role in employer-sponsored training, but that it will be necessary for colleges to learn more about employer needs, to place more emphasis on course standards, to be more flexible in terms of curriculum design and location of training, and to pay more attention to marketing their training capabilities.

Forging a wide range of partnerships: A legacy of inaction in the past has resulted in relationships between educational institutions that feature more walls than doors. Individual institutions have made efforts to forge links with other educational bodies, but until recently there has been little in the way of provincial initiatives in this area.

Better links between the schools and colleges are needed to smooth the transition for high school graduates entering college programs, to increase participation and to help ensure that students have an opportunity to succeed. Trends in employment suggest the need for greater opportunities for college students to take advanced studies, either through improved college-university links or at the colleges.

Renewing human resources, curriculum and delivery methods: Human resource development in the colleges requires improvement. While some colleges have effective programs, there has been a general tendency to consider professional development as an individual, rather than an institutional or system responsibility. In addition, there is a need for more emphasis on the development of curriculum and innovative delivery techniques.

Addressing the quality-access-funding trade-offs: Many of those working in the colleges identified the difficulty of maintaining both quality and access, given the resources provided to the college system. The complexity of the issues related to the trade-offs between quality, access and funding, will be even greater in the 1990s. Enrolment projections prepared for Vision 2000 indicate the colleges should expect substantial growth in the years ahead — about a 30 per cent increase in full-time post-secondary enrolment between 1988 and 2000. (These projections depend on certain assumptions about economic growth and incomes, and the ability of the colleges to respond to the needs of adult learners. For a more detailed discussion see the Final Report or the Study Team 1 background papers listed in Appendix D.) There is the potential for an even greater increase in part-time enrolment. At the same time, there will be significant increases in the demand for other public services, such as health care. Thus, the college system will continue to face the challenge of meeting increasing demand for places and providing quality career education, while competing with other sectors for the available public resources.

Resolving labour-management disputes: There was a faculty strike in 1984, and another one in 1989, while Vision 2000 was in progress. Since the last strike, the issue of central or local collective

bargaining has resurfaced. Vision 2000 debated the issue; different opinions within the Steering Committee reflect the sharp divisions in the system. Since there are detailed discussions of labour-management relations taking place through forums other than Vision 2000, it was decided that Vision 2000 would not comment except to express the shared concern of those involved that the labour-management issues be resolved constructively so that they do not jeopardize the renewal of the system.

7 A Renewed Mandate

A renewed mandate is crucial to the future development of the college system. That mandate should include the essence of what was contained in the original mission, updated to reflect the anticipated future needs of students and the province. The original vision of the colleges contained in the founding documents looked to the colleges to be accessible, responsive, innovative and community-focussed. Vision 2000 has concluded that the colleges of the future should be even more accessible, more needs-driven, more flexible and open to change, and more community-focussed than they are now.

The mandate Vision 2000 recommends (Recommendation 1 — see Appendix E for a complete list of recommendations), begins with a preamble about the purpose of education in general. It speaks to the potential impact of education to foster human awareness and promote understanding, to contribute to the positive development of society, and to open up a world of opportunities.

The mandate calls for the provision of high-quality career education that enhances students' ability to acquire information, reason clearly, think critically, communicate effectively, apply their knowledge, and participate in society as informed and productive citizens. It defines accessibility in terms of the opportunity to succeed, as well as to enrol, and in terms of equity. It emphasizes the need for quality assurance through system-wide standards and program review, and promotes links across the educational spectrum to enhance student mobility and encourage lifelong learning.

The mandate calls on the colleges to create a dynamic, learner-driven system that accommodates diversity, and to forge partnerships in and with communities, including employers, labour, community groups and governments. The mandate also supports participation by a range of stakeholders in college decision-making and sets the goal for colleges to be model employers in their human resource development, commitment to equity, and the creation of a positive, healthy and supportive working environment.

This renewed mandate does not imply, nor does Vision 2000 recommend, that the broad role of the colleges in career education in Ontario be curtailed. During Vision 2000's extensive consultations and discussions there was little support for the view that the colleges should become more exclusive organizations. If anything, the consensus was that they should be more inclusive — they should be making greater efforts to serve those groups which have been least well served in the past.

There are those who argue that the colleges should pull back from the broad mandate they were given 25 years ago, from their current diversity of roles and clients, and concentrate on a more

8

restricted set of needs and a narrower client focus. They argue that it is too difficult to perform a wide range of functions well, particularly in the fast-paced world in which we live today.

The system has had difficulty, at times, coping with the competing priorities entailed by a broad range of functions. However, these problems have not stemmed from an inherent inability of the colleges to manage a range of roles. Rather, they are related to factors that have been largely beyond the control of the colleges — the impact of volatile government funding over the past decade; the lack of co-ordination of new initiatives affecting the colleges; the lack of involvement of the colleges in the planning for these initiatives; and the government's long hesitation in providing a positive and renewed mandate for the college system.

The diverse and growing educational needs of Ontario are a compelling reason to maintain the broad mandate of the colleges so that colleges may be able to respond to the needs of the future — the needs of learners, employers and the larger community — as those needs evolve.

The following sections discuss in more detail key proposals contained in the Final Report *Vision* 2000: *Quality and Opportunity*.

8 Assuring Quality

Reorienting the curriculum: Providing the specific skills training necessary to do a job — whether it is soil mechanics, computer-assisted design or sports administration — will always be an important part of what the colleges do. But it is also essential that the students who graduate from a college of applied arts and technology have the general knowledge and generic skills that will allow them to continue learning, both on and off the job, throughout their lives.

General education is currently supposed to constitute at least 30 per cent of post-secondary program content in the colleges; however, most programs have considerably less. From the beginning of the college system, general education has received less emphasis than vocational skills training, and its position has further declined in the last decade.

The debate about how broad a college career education should be is not a new one. However, it has been lent more urgency by the rapidly-changing economic environment which demands a labour force that can adapt to new technologies and learn new skills. The need for a refrigeration technologist to understand refrigeration is obvious. However, it is also essential for that technologist to be able to write a clear and concise report, and to communicate and work effectively with customers and co-workers.

In addition, the communications revolution has expanded the horizons of citizenship so that people can, and should, feel part of local, national and international debates on issues that affect them, their families and their futures. Helping people to be good citizens, as well as productive workers with marketable skills, should be part of the educational experience at a college.

The focus here is on those career-oriented programs that lead to a college post-secondary credential. For many stakeholders, the question is not whether the curriculum should be changed, but how best to do it. They note that the existing provincial guideline of 30 per cent general education content is, in most cases, not being met. They ask what can be done differently that will achieve the goal of a more well-rounded curriculum.

Vision 2000 considered recommending that general education and generic skills should constitute 50 per cent of program content. However, specifying a fixed proportion of each program's content or courses would not necessarily achieve the desired outcomes. Traditionally, an orientation to time or percentage of courses has meant adding and subtracting program hours or courses in a program. Vision 2000 did not choose to use this as the basis for its approach. The report recommends that the generic skills and general education content of programs leading to a college credential be significantly increased to ensure an equivalence of learning outcomes between these components and specific occupational skills. (Recommendation 2)

The absence of a fixed percentage, however, should not be interpreted as suggesting that only minimal change is required. On the contrary, the report advocates nothing less than a major reorientation of the curriculum in the direction of general education and generic skills.

System-wide standards and program review: The final report also recommends system-wide standards for all programs leading to a college credential. These standards should focus on the learning outcomes, that is, the skills graduates are expected to have acquired upon completion of a program. In addition, there should be regular, system-wide program review for the purposes of accrediting all programs leading to a college credential. (Recommendations 3 & 4)

System-wide outcome standards are necessary as a basis for monitoring and improving educational quality in college programs. Standards across the system will ensure the equivalency of programs across the province. Currently, in the absence of program standards that apply to every college, there is understandable confusion about the meaning and value of college credentials. Employers have told Vision 2000 that they see a fluctuating range of skills and knowledge among graduates of different colleges and from different programs.

The system must be able to assure learners, employers, and the public that the programs provided by the colleges are of consistently high quality, current and relevant to the needs of the community. System-wide standards are needed to ensure that graduates of a given program, from any college, have achieved a clearly defined level of knowledge, skill and ability in their field. Consistent standards are needed to facilitate student mobility within the system and to encourage recurrent learning.

Having such standards should not unduly restrict institutional autonomy. The standards will not apply to how a program is delivered; that will be decided by each college. Rather, the standards should provide colleges with a description of the outcomes of the learning process. Uniformity in delivery or specific content is not a necessary result of defining standards.

Regular review of programs is essential to ensure that standards are maintained and that pro-

grams are meeting those standards. The report links program review to accreditation. Currently, most college programs go through an approval process by MCU prior to being offered. Once the program is approved, there is no regular review by the Ministry. Some selected programs, mainly in the health sciences, are accredited on an ongoing basis by agencies external to the colleges.

Currently, individual colleges have the responsibility for assuring quality for the vast majority of their programs. The nature and extent of individual college program review has varied greatly, and there is no system-wide review function in place for the majority of programs.

College Standards and Accreditation Council: To provide a means whereby the college system can collectively take responsibility for program quality, in partnership with external stakeholders, Vision 2000 recommends creation of a broadly representative College Standards and Accreditation Council (CSAC) that would have executive authority in the areas of system-wide program standards, review and accreditation. (Recommendation 5)

CSAC would fulfil a role as a guarantor of overall academic quality and direction for the system by: developing outcome standards (to be carried out by a series of program councils); developing the framework for program review and approving the reviewers; representing the system in academic matters; assuring general education and generic skills are incorporated in all credential programs; and providing overall consistency in the awarding of credentials.

CSAC membership would include representation from college academic, support and administrative, labour, community groups, employers (public and private), professional associations, educators from secondary schools and universities, and governments. CSAC would be independently associated with the Council of Regents (COR). Members would be appointed by COR, with most groups nominating their own representatives. The exception would be CSAC's Chair who would be appointed by order-in-council.

With the creation of CSAC, the role of college boards would remain essentially intact. Boards would continue to determine their own mix of courses and the specific content and delivery of programs to meet local needs. Local program advisory committees would continue to operate. Boards would have the additional responsibility of ensuring that their programs meet provincial standards.

MCU would continue to have primary responsibility for allocation of funds to accredited programs and for final approval of new program proposals.

9 Enhancing Opportunity

Vision 2000 believes that colleges can, and should, make high-quality, career education more accessible to a broad range of learners with diverse learning needs. The ultimate aim of improving accessibility is not just to recruit more students; it is to help expand people's educational and employment opportunities, and in so doing, to raise the overall educational and skill level of Ontario's workforce.

The way Vision 2000 foresees the colleges improving accessibility also makes an important statement about the kind of institutions the colleges should be. Access must be equitable: that is, there must be equal opportunity to enrol and succeed in college programs. And there must be an active effort to "screen in" learners who have different levels of educational achievement, who are from various cultural and linguistic backgrounds, who are from different age groups, and who have had different experiences in the labour force.

Renewing the college system must include a firm commitment to the colleges' role in serving a diversity of needs, through effective partnerships with a full range of community constituencies. To do otherwise is to ignore the best available estimates of Ontario's labour market needs. The rationale for increasing educational opportunities for a broad cross-section of the population has a social as well as an economic context. If, as a society, Ontario chooses to concentrate mainly on educating the highly-skilled worker and ignores the needs of those who have been traditionally disadvantaged, educationally and economically, there is a risk of widening the gulf between the "haves" and the "have-nots." Ontario's colleges risk becoming contributors to a more polarized society if they do not make concerted efforts to serve those who need them the most.

The mission statements of the colleges express their commitment to being open, accessible and responsive community-based institutions. However, Vision 2000 heard widespread concerns from a variety of stakeholders, both inside and outside the system, that there are significant barriers to equitable access that are affecting the ability of colleges to respond to the needs in their communities and the demands of a changing social and economic environment.

Educational equity: It is recognized that many colleges have taken steps to address these barriers. But there is still much that can be done, and it is essential to ensure that the response is systemwide. The report notes that educational equity involves the identification and removal of systemic barriers to educational opportunities that discriminate against women, visible minorities, aboriginal peoples, persons with disabilities, people living in poverty, or members of other groups which have been identified as being underserved with respect to their needs for post-secondary education. Educational equity, as defined in the report, also involves the implementation of special measures and the application of the concept of reasonable accommodation when these are necessary to achieve and maintain a student population which is representative of the communities served.

Vision 2000 recommends that every college should have in place educational equity policies and formally defined measures for implementing and monitoring those policies; race and ethnic relations policies; mechanisms to monitor employment equity policies; and mechanisms for building and maintaining partnerships with special communities and for advocating on their behalf on issues of educational equity. (Recommendation 6)

The Minister of Colleges and Universities should require every college board to include in the college's annual report to the Minister a specific section on "serving communities." COR should develop system-wide guidelines to assist colleges in developing educational equity policies. COR should also produce and disseminate an annual report on college initiatives in serving their commu-

12 A Summary

nities, based on the annual college reports to the Minister. This public reporting should serve to reinforce positive activities and call attention to any lack of progress. (Recommendations 7 & 8)

Preparing for success: In support of the principle that access must include a reasonable opportunity to succeed, as well as to enrol, the report makes recommendations related to high school graduates who are underprepared for their college post-secondary programs, and adult learners who lack the basic skills of literacy and numeracy.

Vision 2000 believes there are compelling reasons for colleges to continue to offer basic skills/ preparatory courses to both types of student. One of the major reasons is student preference: many students — mature students and recent graduates alike — would rather "go to college" than back to high school for these courses, particularly if they associate high school with past failure. For students already enrolled in a post-secondary program, colleges may be able to tailor preparatory courses, in terms of content and scheduling, to the students' post-secondary programs; adults who go to college for basic education courses may be encouraged to seek further educational opportunities once they are there. Further, employers will be looking increasingly to the colleges for workplace or work-related training, and part of that demand will be for basic skills for employees, perhaps combined with some job-specific skills training.

One of the major problems with preparatory courses for high school graduates enrolled in post-secondary programs is that MCU does not provide explicit funding. Colleges that offer preparatory courses have to find funds from general operating revenues. Vision 2000 recommends that colleges should provide such courses, perhaps in conjunction with local school boards, and that MCU should provide explicit funding. (Recommendations 10 & 11)

In order for colleges to know the level at which students are functioning when they enter a college post-secondary program, it is important that they be assessed, and if necessary that placement counselling be provided. While some colleges test their incoming students, not all do. The report recommends that colleges assess, where necessary, the literacy and numeracy levels of applicants to college credential programs for the purpose of appropriate placement. While all colleges should have an assessment service, each college would have the discretion to decide whether or not to assess an individual student. (Recommendation 9)

The report notes that the illiteracy problem among adults in our society is too vast for the colleges to tackle alone. The colleges now provide basic skills, literacy, life skills or language courses, generally in short programs that are usually funded by the federal government or the provincial government (MSD or MOE). The colleges should continue to be major providers of basic education courses for adults, but they should not necessarily be the only providers in the community. The literacy field now has a multiplicity of providers and funders, and the needs exceed available resources. Since a major problem is lack of co-ordination and planning, as well as lack of funds to meet the needs, the Ontario government is urged to take responsibility for co-ordination of policy, planning and increased funding of adult basic education in the province. (Recommendations 12 & 13)

Fee-for-service activity: The report also recommends ways to improve colleges' ability to provide fee-for-service training for employers. The fee-for-service activities referred to in this section

of the report are those that are beyond the level of adult basic education. Much of this activity is non-post-secondary training in narrowly defined job-specific skills; it is usually of short duration (i.e. one year or less) and involves a variety of purchasers, including both the provincial and federal governments, employers and international agencies.

Vision 2000 believes that the fee-for-service area is one which will, and should, become a more important function of the colleges. To ensure that the public interest is served, as well as the interests of employers and workers, there should be carefully developed guidelines governing this activity. Currently, there are some concerns and confusion about the existing ground rules as to when training purchased by employers from colleges is eligible for public subsidy; in addition, changing circumstances may require further development of fee-for-service guidelines. For example, it may be in the public interest to provide some financial incentive to employers purchasing college courses which have a strong generic skills content.

The report recommends that COR appoint an ad hoc task force on fee-for-service training by colleges to advise the Minister on policy guidelines which would foster the colleges' role in meeting the training needs of the existing workforce in a manner consistent with public policy goals. The report also recommends that, beginning from the current collective agreement, the parties should seek ways to facilitate the colleges' ability to provide fee-for-service activities. In addition, each college should develop strategies for establishing long-term relationships with local fee-for-service clients such as employers and labour organizations. (Recommendations 14, 15 & 16)

The report supports the principle that public funds be used primarily to support programs provided by or in conjunction with public institutions, including colleges. It is expected that, as a result of the deliberations of the Premier's Council, the Ontario government will be proposing initiatives aimed at increasing the resources devoted to educating the labour force. Vision 2000 recommends that any provincial body designated to foster more skills training should include employer and labour representatives and educators. It should produce a bi-annual public report that includes a description of training activities that received public funds, the distribution of public funds among providers of training, an evaluation of the effectiveness of such training and identification of training needs not being met. (Recommendations 17 & 18)

Part-time learners: The report also discusses improving opportunities for the part-time learner, who is usually an adult with work and family responsibilities. It is recommended that colleges offer a variety of flexible learning opportunities, through such methods as greater use of customized instructional units, off-campus teaching locations, variable course entrance and completion dates and other innovative approaches. Every college should also have an advisory committee on part-time learning. In addition, provincial funding and internal allocation of college revenues should explicitly recognize the nature and importance of programs and services required by part-time learners. (Recommendation 19)

14 A Summary

10 Forging Links

Another major direction of Vision 2000 is promoting better and more effective links between partners in the Ontario educational system. This is intended to offer more opportunities for educational mobility, success and career advancement for students.

Prior Learning Assessment Network: There are many adult learners who are seeking to return to the educational system after some time in the workforce or who come to Ontario from other jurisdictions. There should be an accessible and equitable system of evaluating the knowledge and skills people have acquired prior to their admission to a college program. That learning may have been acquired in other educational institutions, in Ontario or in other jurisdictions, or in on-the-job training or other non-institutional learning experiences.

Formal recognition of students' previous learning and experience is one of the ways of putting lifelong learning into practice. Validating the educational achievements of individuals is akin to recognizing the value of an existing asset upon which new educational investments can be built. It encourages people to continue learning by giving them fair credit for what they have already learned. The report supports the recommendation of the recent Report of the Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario for a province-wide Prior Learning Assessment Network (PLAN). Vision 2000 urges the explicit inclusion of the colleges in the planning, implementation and operation of this system. (Recommendation 20)

School-college links: Vision 2000 looked at ways of addressing the compartmentalization of the school system and the college system. They have traditionally operated in isolation from each other, though there have been recent efforts to promote co-ordination through local linking (articulation) agreements between individual colleges and school boards and through provincial funding to further develop local links.

A history of lack of collaboration in curriculum development between the two systems may be contributing to attrition rates in both the schools and the colleges. Some secondary school students, particularly at the general level, may leave high school before completing their diploma because they do not see any appealing career prospects ahead and they lack a clear perception of the occupational alternatives available to them and the means to reach them. Some high school graduates who go to college may drop out because they are underprepared for their post-secondary program. There are also concerns that students may not be getting the information they need while they are in high school to make an informed choice about an appropriate college program.

The report suggests the development of complementary curricula and clear and consistent program links between schools and colleges; innovative ways to organize and deliver curriculum and services co-operatively, such as combining some secondary and college studies; co-operative human resource development for school and college teachers; and better information links between the two systems.

The report recommends that teacher education programs, both pre-service and in-service, provide secondary school teachers, guidance counsellors and principals with in-depth information

about the college system. The recommendation suggests this may be accomplished through the newly formed Teacher Education Council of Ontario. Vision 2000 also recommends that the Ministries of Education and Colleges and Universities form a Provincial Schools/Colleges Co-ordinating Council, with representation from stakeholders from both systems, to improve school-college links and foster initiatives at the local level. This council would provide a forum for co-ordinating curricula, promoting local articulation agreements and other co-operative arrangements and providing more information on the colleges to students. (Recommendations 21 & 22)

Advanced training opportunities: Vision 2000 believes students should have expanded and improved opportunities for advanced training, both in the colleges and in concert with universities. A college diploma should not be a "terminal" credential for those students who are interested in pursuing more advanced studies. The pressures to undertake more advanced training are increasing. In a number of fields of study, the training required, particularly in theory and technological applications, is increasing in both quantity and complexity. In addition, there is evidence that the Ontario economy will require an increased supply of high-quality technologists and engineers to meet global competition.

The report defines advanced training as education that combines the strong applied focus of college career-oriented programs with a strong foundation of theory and analytical skills. College students now have limited access to advanced training through two routes: combining college with university studies, mainly through the provision of advanced standing in a university program, and some selected post-diploma offerings within the colleges. Ontario's colleges do not currently offer degrees.

There are some program-specific arrangements which have been negotiated by individual colleges and universities that facilitate college students' access to university programs, and in some cases facilitate university students' access to college programs. Under these arrangements, students tend to receive somewhat more credit for their college experience than when there is no bilateral agreement in place.

However, this laissez-faire model for developing college-university program arrangements appears to yield rather limited and quite uneven opportunities for college graduates wanting to enrol in university programs in Ontario. Arrangements exist for only a limited number of programs, and there are very few arrangements in the technical fields. For the most part, arrangements for a particular program exist only at one or two colleges, and not at other colleges offering the program. In addition, when a college does negotiate an agreement, it is typically with only one university, causing extensive duplication of effort when the college seeks to extend such agreements.

The advanced training within the colleges at the post-diploma level tends to be short-term, typically one year or less, and the usual credential is a certificate. Regardless of the value of the program, the lack of a well-recognized credential diminishes the status of these studies from the perspective of both students and employers.

Vision 2000 recommends that the Minister of Colleges and Universities endeavour to expand and improve the opportunities for students to move between the college and university sectors, while

16 A Summary

maintaining the distinctiveness of each. Each sector fulfils an important educational role in Ontario, and Vision 2000 does not believe the colleges should be turned into "feeder" institutions for the universities. (Recommendation 23)

Links between the two sectors can be improved without compromising the distinctiveness of either. Further, the college system can develop its own advanced programs without adversely affecting the colleges' ability to serve those seeking the career education traditionally provided by colleges.

The report recommends the college system develop comprehensive programs of advanced training on a selective basis to meet student needs. Since a certificate does not convey the high level of study in a post-diploma program, the report recommends that a unique credential be developed for the college post-diploma level. These advanced programs would focus on the application of knowledge and skills in the workplace, and would be more vocationally-oriented than traditional university arts and science programs. (Recommendation 24)

To achieve its goals in the area of advanced training, Vision 2000 recommends the creation of a provincial institute for advanced training. This institute would be one "without walls"; the report does not recommend building, in a physical sense, a new post-secondary institute. The institute envisioned would facilitate the development and co-ordination of college-university arrangements for combined studies; offer combined college-university degree programs, with instruction based at and provided by colleges and universities; and recommend to the College Standards and Accreditation Council the development of college-based advanced training programs where appropriate. (Recommendation 25)

There was considerable debate within Vision 2000 about how this new institute would operate. The report concludes that a committee, led by MCU and composed of representatives of COR, the Ontario Council on University Affairs, the Council of Presidents (COP) and the Council of Ontario Universities, should endeavour to establish a formal agreement of association between the institute and one or more Ontario universities. The universities would provide the degrees to graduates of programs conducted under the auspices of the institute. (Recommendation 26)

However, if there is no interest among the universities in this option after 18 months, the report recommends that the government vest degree-granting authority in the institute itself. The institute would then be similar to the Council for National Academic Awards in the United Kingdom, for example, under whose auspices degree programs are offered by polytechnics. The membership of the institute would include representatives of colleges, universities, business and industry, labour and government. (Recommendation 27)

11 Planning, Funding and Human Resources

There are other issues dealt with in the report which also fall under Vision 2000's two major themes of assuring quality and enhancing opportunity. They are mostly related to implementing major directions through planning, funding, and developing human resources, curriculum and delivery methods.

Quality-access-funding: One of the major questions facing the colleges is how the system should respond to the conflicts or trade-offs between quality, access and funding. The resolution of these conflicts and the process by which that resolution is arrived at ultimately determine the performance of the college system and affect how the system is perceived by learners, employers and others. It is essential that the colleges address the trade-offs, and it is by working as a system that they will develop the most effective solutions.

A major challenge facing the colleges is how to maintain a high-quality and accessible institution, when there are limitations on funding. Managing finances is a major challenge in any public or private enterprise. In the case of the colleges, it is anticipated that public funds will continue to be limited, and colleges will need to work together to meet future challenges. Over the years the colleges have experienced some large variations in funding levels from MCU. The absence of appropriate indicators has made it difficult, if not impossible, to ascertain how fluctuations in funding have affected program quality.

Strategic planning: The events of the past decade have revealed that effective mechanisms or processes are not in place for examining the quality-access-funding relationships or determining which actions are likely to be most effective in minimizing negative effects. The report recommends that a College System Strategic Planning Committee be established by COR, with broad representation by stakeholders. This committee would undertake research related to the quality-access-funding trade-offs facing the colleges, disseminate its analyses and information throughout the system and recommend to the Minister strategies for addressing these trade-offs. (Recommendation 28)

The report also proposes that MCU review the structure of its funding to the colleges in order to provide a mechanism that explicitly considers both access and quality; reduces counter-productive enrolment competition among the colleges; provides greater stability in the funding provided to each college by dampening the effects of enrolment changes on a college's grant; and continues to provide predictability and promote efficiency while strengthening accountability in the use of public resources. (Recommendation 29) The report explores three funding options: adjusting the existing funding formula, establishing a floor for per-student funding, and envelope or target funding.

The report also discusses the effect on college budgets of funding for training initiatives supported by other provincial ministries, such as MSD, and by the federal government. Because of the cyclical demand for skills training, many of the short programs sponsored by these other provincial ministries and the federal government are subject to unstable funding. No long-term commitment to funding exists, and programs tend to be launched and then either cancelled or reduced on short

18 A Summary

notice. The report recommends the Ontario government introduce a more participatory and coordinated system for developing government policies, initiatives and funding arrangements affecting skills training provided by the colleges. (Recommendation 30)

Vision 2000 also recommends that the government initiate a study, encompassing both colleges and universities, to assess the impact of alternative tuition fee and student aid policies on access and institutional revenues. (Recommendation 31)

The Strategic Planning Committee of COR should also develop and recommend a mechanism to co-ordinate information and plans relevant to the sharing of specialized resources among the colleges. Some sharing of such resources is already happening in the system, but there is no open and organized forum in place to help all colleges plan and co-ordinate efforts. Examples of sharing could be job exchanges between colleges to share expertise in a particular program, sharing of training materials, or co-operative program development which would allow students to attend more than one college to tap special expertise as part of their program. (Recommendation 32)

Developing human resources, curriculum and alternative delivery: The renewal of the system that we envision will require extensive development of faculty and staff, curriculum and delivery methods. Those who create the learning environment in colleges must themselves be involved in renewing their ability to serve changing student needs. If recommendations in the report are adopted, colleges will need, for example, to adapt to new system-wide program standards and criteria for quality assurance, meet requirements for more general education and generic skills, develop more flexible delivery methods for adult learners, and provide more advanced training. Colleges must also be planning for large-scale retirements by staff that will occur in the next decade and a half.

It is recommended that colleges reinforce the major objectives of Vision 2000 through human resource planning that includes initiatives such as: setting clear budgetary targets for increasing the share of funds devoted to human resource development (HRD); providing information on HRD in their annual report to the Minister; and developing policy guidelines which provide regular opportunities and direct encouragement for external work experience, job exchanges and international activity by faculty, staff and administrators. (Recommendation 33)

The Ontario government should work with stakeholders in the system to establish a permanent Professional Development Fund to reinforce and expand upon the efforts initiated by the "Human Resources in the Third Decade" project of COP. It should also set up an Instructional Development Task Force to provide leadership in helping colleges develop learner-centred curriculum and alternative delivery methods. (Recommendation 34)

The report also supports development of graduate-level programs for college personnel at university, and asks the Minister of Colleges and Universities to provide the funding to allow such programs to be developed at one or more Ontario universities. (Recommendation 35) In addition, Vision 2000 urges the colleges to work together to foster applied scholarship activities by college personnel as a way of contributing to the overall goal of teaching excellence. For many teachers in the system, the most effective way to stay current in their field and improve their teaching is by

participating in a range of activities — from problem solving and the transfer or diffusion of information and technology to the development of new services and products. (Recommendation 36) Colleges are also asked to experiment in developing reciprocal methods of performance review for all employees. (Recommendation 37)

College boards and the Council of Regents: The report emphasizes the important role of college boards of governors in implementing a renewal of the system. It is recommended that each board further develop its capacity to plan strategically, particularly in terms of quality, access and funding issues, and to work in partnership with a range of stakeholders to meet student needs. (Recommendation 38)

Vision 2000 also considers the role of COR in the context of a renewed mandate. COR is called upon to assume responsibility for CSAC, and to develop its existing policy and planning role by, for example, establishing a Strategic Planning Committee for the system and an ad hoc task force on feefor-service training issues. In addition to the role described for COR in other parts of the report, Vision 2000 requests that COR conduct an operational review of its board appointment responsibilities, using a third-party process. The Council's current process of appointing external members to each college's board needs to be strengthened to ensure that local boards have the requisite capabilities to provide the type of leadership that will be needed in the coming decades. Of major importance is that board members be representative of their communities, and that boards have the experience and expertise required for the challenges ahead. (Recommendation 39)

Finally, the report requests the Minister of Colleges and Universities to establish a broadly representative committee to co-ordinate evaluation and development of detailed plans for implementation of Vision 2000's recommendations. (Recommendation 40)

12 Conclusion: Envisioning the Future

The college system represents an important public resource for this province. That resource must be revitalized to meet the needs of this province in the year 2000 and beyond. After 25 years, the system must rekindle the spirit that energized its formative years. That spirit is needed again to take the system through a process of creative renewal and into the 21st century.

The Vision 2000 final report, with its 40 recommendations, portrays a collective vision of the role of the colleges into the next century. *Vision 2000: Quality and Opportunity* envisions a time when:

- the college system is known internationally for the quality of its graduates, for students
 who have acquired the knowledge and skills which enable them to flourish in changing
 circumstances, to build productive and rewarding careers and to participate in society
 as informed and socially responsible citizens;
- the colleges are part of an educational system which is proud of its success in creating a learning environment that eliminates the social and economic barriers to full and equal participation by all members of society;

20 A Summary

- the colleges are a key component of Ontario's efforts to realize social, economic and labour market objectives;
- the college system has a solid reputation for high and consistent standards;
- the colleges are leaders in the practice of accountable governance through collaborative decision-making;
- the colleges plan strategically and work as a system to realize shared goals;
- in partnership with schools and universities, the colleges are part of an educational system which offers students the widest possible educational horizons;
- the colleges give fair recognition to the prior learning and experience of prospective students and provide a valuable "passport" to employment and to opportunities for recurrent learning;
- the colleges are major contributors to the success of efforts by governments, educational institutions, community groups, employers, labour and others to eliminate illiteracy;
- the college system is an exemplar of lifelong learning in the way it provides flexible, student-driven learning opportunities for both employees and students.

Preparing for the future will require many changes, not just for Ontario's colleges. The colleges have a crucial role to play in assisting Ontario to adapt and succeed in a new economic and social reality. But in order to be effective instruments of public policy, the government must begin to include the colleges, from the outset of the policy process, as major partners in provincial planning. Vision 2000 believes that, taken together, the recommendations in the Final Report indicate why an integrated, co-ordinated and collaborative approach to shaping policies for the future is necessary. The colleges are ready to take on the tasks and engage in the needed partnerships. It is Vision 2000's hope that they will be invited to do so.



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Robert Mitchelson, Vice-President, Administration

Fanshawe College
Emily Marcoccia,
Manager, Public Relations

Georgian College
Fred Ruemper,
Professor, School of Business, and
Chair, College Council

Humber College

Bev Walden,

Associate Dean of Planning, and

Michael Harper,

Dean, Technology

Lambton College

George Allan,

Professor, Departments of Mathematics, and Instrumentation & Control

Mohawk College

Andy Tapajna,

Director, College Planning

Northern College

Theresa Savord.

Administrative Assistant, Student Services Department,

Phillipe Boissonneault,

Principal, Kapuskasing Campus

Seneca College

Tony Tilly,

Dean, Continuing Education

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Paul Smith,

Director of Planning & Staff Development,

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St. Lawrence College

Robin Pepper,

Director of Communications

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Assistant to the President

Loyalist College

Maureen Piercy,

Director, Community Affairs

Niagara College

George Repar,

Director, Planning, Research & Development

Sault College

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Chair, Academic Services

Sheridan College

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Former Director of Planning

St. Clair College

Lynn Watts,

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Planning & Budget



Vision 2000 Background Papers

Background papers prepared for Study Team 1:

The Determinants of Enrolment Rates and Enrolments in Ontario Community Colleges

David K. Foot and Maia MacNiven

The College System — An Empirical Snapshot **Vision 2000**

With the Future in Mind: An Environmental Scan Vision 2000

Background papers prepared for Study Team 2:

Choosing Equity and Prosperity: Access to College and the Ontario Economy

Pat Armstrong and Hugh Armstrong

Meeting the Competitive Challenge: Enhancing Applied Research in Ontario's Colleges Sandford Borins and Shirley Holloway

Role of the Colleges in the Changing Economy — Report on Consultations **Audrey Gill**

Toward a Highly Qualified Workforce: Improving the Terms of the Equity-Efficiency Trade-off Rianne Mahon

Industrial Restructuring, Occupational Shifts and Skills: The Steel and Electronic Manufacturing Cases

Peter Warrian

New Technology and Education: A Challenge for the Colleges

David Wolfe

Background papers prepared for Study Team 3:

Meeting the Needs of Diverse Learners: Submissions from Community Organizations and the Colleges

Francie Aspinall

Post Secondary Skills Training and Education for Senior Citizens

Bernice Bell

Special Needs Students: Toward the Year 2000

Elizabeth Thorsen

Ontario's Community Colleges: Values for the Year 2000

Susan Wismer

Towards the Year 2000: Communities within Colleges

Susan Wismer

Relevancy and Linkages: Colleges and Communities Working Together

Susan Wismer

Background papers prepared for Study Team 4:

Alternative Delivery of Instruction in Post-Compulsory Education **George Allan**

Access and Quality: Preparatory and Remedial Education in the Colleges

Terry Dance and Roy Giroux

Quality From an Instructional Perspective

Harv Honsberger

Tasks and Roles in Curriculum Development

Harv Honsberger

Themes and Implications: A Report on the Visions from the College System

Harv Honsberger

Expanding the Core: General Education, Generic Skills, and Core Curriculum in Ontario Community Colleges

Michael Park

Mini Scanning the Future

Irene Ross

Most Things to More People

Norman Rowen

Pressures for Change, Opportunities for Development

Norman Rowen

Towards a Self-Governing System: Some Aspects of Quality and Proposals for Change

Norman Rowen

Background papers prepared for Study Team 5:

Summary of Submissions Received in Response to "An Invitation to Participate" **Felicity Corelli**

College to University—An Analysis of Transfer Credit Policy and Practice **John Dennison**

College-University Transfer Arrangements Existing in Ontario

Robert Alexander Marshall

Consultations on College-University Linkages

Craig McFadyen

The Relationship Between Schools and Colleges

Jo Oppenheimer

How Ontario's Colleges Might Respond to Pressures for the Provision of More Advanced Training Michael Skolnik

Skilled and Educated: A Solution to Ontario's Urgent Need for More Polytechnic Programs

Stuart Smith

College Transfer Revisited: A Working Paper

Peter Stokes

Other background papers prepared for Vision 2000:

Perceptions of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology: Interviews with Cabinet Ministers and Other MPPs

Peter Adams, Charles Pascal and Mora Thompson

Colleges in and of their Communities: A Case Study of Sault College, Elliot Lake Campus Hugh Armstrong and Peter Warrian

Vision Franco-Ontarienne de l'avenir des collèges (Franco-Ontarian Vision of the Future of Colleges)

Anne Gilbert

Models for Increased Private Sector Financing of Training and Labour Market Development Craig McFadyen and Robert Alexander Marshall

Vision 2000 Alumni Focus Group Summary Report

Charles Pascal

A Framework for Reviewing the Mandate of Ontario's System of Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology

Vision 2000



Summary of Recommendations



Recommendation 1

The Government of Ontario and the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology should adopt the following mandate for Ontario's colleges:

Preamble

Education has an essential role to play in the development of a world which is peaceful, environmentally sound, equitable and economically viable. Education should help to balance individual and community needs, and foster personal initiative and co-operation within human relationships based on mutual respect.

Education should give people the opportunity to develop the skills and knowledge they need to adapt to and make a constructive contribution to the world in which they live. Education should enhance students' choices and opportunities, and promote the development of individual potential. It should also assist learners in developing their commitment to social responsibility and care for the communities in which they live, and respect for cultural integrity and self-determination of those whose language and traditions may be different from their own.

It is the mandate of the Colleges of Applied Arts and Technology of Ontario:

To provide high-quality career education that enhances students' ability to acquire information, reason clearly, think critically, communicate effectively, apply their knowledge and participate in society as informed and productive citizens.

To make a college education as accessible as possible. Accessibility should include the opportunity to succeed, as well as the opportunity to enrol, and it must be provided in a way that achieves educational equity.

To be responsible, as a system, for quality assurance through system-wide standards and program review.

To work together and with other educational institutions to offer students opportunities for educational mobility and lifelong learning.

To create a dynamic, learner-driven system by anticipating and accommodating the diverse needs of students, both full-time and part time, enrolled in credit and non-credit courses.

To forge partnerships in and with their communities, including employers, labour, community groups and governments.

To be participatory institutions in which decision-making involves both internal and external stakeholders.

To be model employers in the manner in which they invest in and manage human resource development, in their commitment to equity and in the creation of a positive, healthy and supportive working environment.



There should be a significant increase in the generic skills and general education content of programs leading to a college credential to ensure an equivalence of learning outcomes between these components and specific occupational skills.



Recommendation 3

There should be system-wide standards for all programs leading to a college credential. Such standards must focus on the learning outcomes expected of graduates from a program.



Recommendation 4

All programs leading to a college credential should be subject to regular, system-wide program review for the purposes of accreditation.



Recommendation 5

A College Standards and Accreditation Council (CSAC) should be established, with participation of internal and external stakeholders and with executive authority in the areas of system-wide program standards, review and accreditation.



Recommendation 6

Every college should have in place:

- educational equity policies and formally defined measures for implementing and monitoring those policies;
- race and ethnic relations policies to promote tolerance and understanding between peoples of different cultures and races;
- mechanisms to monitor employment equity policies to ensure that college personnel, boards and committees are representative of the diverse communities they serve; and
- mechanisms for building and maintaining effective partnerships with special communities and for advocating on their behalf on issues of educational equity.



Recommendation 7

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities should require every college board of governors to include in the college's annual report to the Minister a specific "Serving Communities" section outlining college activities in the areas of educational equity, race relations, employment equity and community outreach activities.



Recommendation 8

The Council of Regents should develop system-wide guidelines to assist colleges in developing educational equity policies. The Council should also produce and disseminate an annual report on college initiatives in serving communities.



Recommendation 9

Every college should, where necessary, conduct assessments of the literacy and numeracy levels of applicants to college credential programs for the purpose of appropriate placement. The need for assessment of an individual student should be at the discretion of the college.



Ontario's colleges should provide preparatory courses designed to meet the needs of those with a secondary school diploma or equivalent seeking admission to college credential programs. These courses may be offered in conjunction with local school boards.



Recommendation 11

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities should provide explicit funding to the colleges for preparatory courses in a manner consistent with the funding of college post-secondary programs.



Recommendation 12

The college system should continue to be a major provider of adult basic education.



Recommendation 13

The provincial government should accept responsibility for the co-ordination of policy, planning and increased funding of adult basic education programs in Ontario.



Recommendation 14

An ad hoc task force on fee-for-service training by colleges should be established by the Council of Regents to advise the Minister on policy guidelines which would foster the colleges' role in meeting the training needs of the existing workforce in a manner consistent with public policy goals.



Recommendation 15

Beginning from the current collective agreement, the parties should seek ways to facilitate the colleges' ability to provide fee-for-service activities.



Recommendation 16

Each college, in conjunction with faculty and staff, should develop strategies for establishing long-term relationships with local fee-for-service clients such as employers and labour organizations.



Recommendation 17

The Ontario government should adopt the principle that public funds, aimed at covering the costs associated with skills training, should be used primarily to support programs provided by or in conjunction with public institutions, including colleges.



Recommendation 18

In order to assure public accountability, any provincial body designated to foster more skills training should include employer and labour representatives and educators, and should produce a public, bi-annual report which:

- describes the training activities receiving public funds;
- shows the distribution of public funds (including federal funds allocated in Ontario) among the providers of training, be they public, private or joint activities:
- evaluates the effectiveness of such training, including an assessment of both quality and cost; and
- identifies training needs which are not being met and which require greater investment.



To better support the needs of part-time learners:

- every college should provide a variety of flexible learning opportunities, through varying educational methods, greater use of customized instructional methods, off-campus teaching locations, variable course entrance and completion dates, and other innovative approaches to delivery of relevant and adult-based programming for part-time learners:
- each college should have an advisory committee on part-time learning; and
- provincial funding and the internal allocation of college revenues should explicitly recognize the nature and importance of programs and services required by part-time learners.



Recommendation 20

The government should establish the Prior Learning Assessment Network (PLAN), as recommended by the Task Force on Access to Professions and Trades in Ontario, with explicit inclusion of Ontario's colleges in the planning, implementation and operation of the system.



Recommendation 21

The Ministry of Education, possibly through the newly formed Teacher Education Council of Ontario, should ensure that all teacher education programs (both pre service and in-service) include components which furnish an in-depth knowledge of the educational services provided by the colleges. In particular, education about the colleges should be an explicit component of professional development for school guidance counsellors, teachers and principals.



Recommendation 22

The Ministries of Education and Colleges and Universities should jointly establish a Provincial Schools/Colleges Co-ordinating Council, with representation of all relevant stakeholders from the secondary school and college systems, to improve school-college links and foster initiatives at the local level.



Recommendation 23

The Minister of Colleges and Universities should endeavour to expand and improve the opportunities for students to move between the college and university sectors, while maintaining the distinctiveness of each sector.



Recommendation 24

The college system should develop comprehensive programs of advanced training, on a selective basis, to address student needs. Graduates of such programs should receive a unique credential at the post-diploma level.



Recommendation 25

The government should establish a provincial institute "without walls" for advanced training to:

- Facilitate the development and co-ordination of arrangements between colleges and universities for combined college-university studies;
- Offer combined college-university degree programs, with instruction based at and provided by colleges and universities;
- Recommend, where appropriate, to the College Standards and Accreditation Council the development of college-based programs of advanced training with a unique credential at the post-diploma level.



A formal agreement of association between the Institute and one or more Ontario universities should be established, providing for the associated universities to grant their degrees to graduates of programs conducted under the auspices of the Institute.



Recommendation 27

In the event that an agreement of association between the Institute and one or more universities cannot be reached within eighteen months, the government should vest degree-granting authority in the Institute itself.



Recommendation 28

A College System Strategic Planning Committee should be established by the Council of Regents. This standing committee would:

- undertake research on the quality-access-funding trade-offs facing Ontario's colleges;
- disseminate analyses and information across the college system; and
- recommend strategies to the Minister of Colleges and Universities for addressing trade-offs between quality, access and funding.



Recommendation 29

The Ministry of Colleges and Universities should review the structure of its funding to the colleges in order to provide a funding mechanism which:

- explicitly considers both access and quality;
- reduces counter-productive enrolment competition among the colleges;
- provides greater stability in the funding provided to each college by dampening the effects of enrolment changes on a college's grant; and
- continues to provide predictability and promote efficiency while strengthening accountability in the use of public resources.



Recommendation 30

The Ontario government should introduce a more participatory and co-ordinated system for developing government policies, initiatives, and funding arrangements affecting skills training provided by the colleges.



Recommendation 31

The government should initiate a study, encompassing both the college and university sectors, to assess the impact of alternative tuition fee and student assistance policies on access and institutional revenues.



Recommendation 32

The Council of Regents, through its Strategic Planning Committee, should develop and recommend a mechanism to co-ordinate information and plans relevant to the sharing of specialized resources among the colleges.



Recommendation 33

Every college's board of governors should reinforce Vision 2000's major objectives through its human resources planning by undertaking initiatives such as:

- setting clear budgetary targets for increasing the share of funds devoted to human resource development (HRD);
- including a section on HRD in the annual report to the Minister, which summarizes the college's progress in developing and implementing HRD

- policies and practices designed to achieve the objectives of the renewed mandate; and
- developing policy guidelines (to complement existing professional development leave policies) which provide regular opportunities and direct encouragement for external work experience, job exchanges or international activity for faculty, support staff and administrators.



The Ontario Government should work with all college stakeholders to establish and fund:

- a permanent Professional Development Fund to reinforce and expand upon the professional development efforts of the HRD in the Third Decade project; and
- an Instructional Development Task Force to provide leadership in helping the colleges develop learner-centred curriculum and alternative delivery.



Recommendation 35

The Minister of Colleges and Universities should provide sufficient funding to enable an Ontario university (or several, working in a consortium) to develop graduate-level programs for community college personnel.



Recommendation 36

The colleges should work together to introduce effective means for fostering applied scholarship as a way of enhancing the primacy of the colleges' teaching function.



Recommendation 37

Each college should experiment in developing reciprocal methods of performance review which are formative in nature for all employees. The process for developing these procedures should itself be collaborative in nature.



Recommendation 38

Each college's board of governors should further develop its capacity for strategic planning, especially on issues related to quality, access and funding, and for working in partnership with a range of stakeholders to meet student needs.



Recommendation 39

The Council of Regents should conduct an operational review of its board appointment responsibilities, employing a third-party process.



Recommendation 40

The Minister of Colleges and Universities should establish a Vision 2000 Implementation Committee to co-ordinate evaluation and development of detailed plans for implementation of Vision 2000's recommendations. This committee should involve all of the major constituencies, both internal and external, that participated in Vision 2000.

